

not who he was by charjace

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Summary:

Tutor Richie & Rebel Eddie

not who he was

Author's Note:

First of, this is a scrapped piece and I'm not very proud of it, but I am proud of parts and therefore can not delete it in it's entirety. I am however, redoing this au and it's better, and I have better muse for it so be on the look out for it in the next few weeks. It will take a similar base outline, and I'll probably use the same filler OC's.

The ocs in this fic are from a different fandom, just used in this fanfic to fill a few spaces, so below, you shall find the fanfic if you choose to read it. I promise the next one will be better

It was Friday after school (he might have *ditched* last period to be able to get to the library in time) and music is playing in his ears as he walks his way to the library where his tutor is waiting for him, the other kid is from the other school, his *old* high school before his mother pulled him out of the school because she didn't like how the teachers were letting him do things she said he couldn't. Even though he could, and *man* could he run in gym, he was one of the best but his mother halted his progress. She wouldn't even let him hang out with his friends, because she also didn't want him hanging out with them anymore. She even went as far as moving them closer to the new school, which meant he was further away from his friends. Eventually, he stopped showing up to their hangouts and started hanging out with new friends. He misses his old friends, even thinks he spots them out and about when he's out with his new ones, but he doesn't go up to them – that bridge was burnt he tells himself.

Walking in to the library he asks the librarian where could he find his tutor, she gives him a smile and leads him to an area near the back where there was someone with a loud Hawaiian shirt, with their hands behind their neck. The lady pointed to him, saying that was the tutor, he gave her a quick thank you and she left to go back to her position.

His mind was supplying a name, a *face* to the shirt – but it couldn't be him why would he *do* this when he could be out playing, or *whatever* he does now. Putting his headphones into his bag, he goes and takes a seat next the other, not bothering to look at the other, but smiling a little when he heard the other jump a little. He started to pull out his books and pens.

“Y’know you coulda warned a guy ‘bout that,” The male next to him spoke, and poked him in the shoulder. “Here to learn maths?... No way,” His tutor spoke, his mouth hanging open. Richie had gotten the name of the kid he was supposed to help with maths. It was ‘going to look good on his college app’, his teachers would say and they pestered him until he gave in and joined the town’s tutoring programme as a tutor. When he saw the name, it shocked him because the only *Eddie Kaspbrak* he knew, he hasn’t seen in almost two years, since his move across town and to a new school. None of the Losers liked that they drifted apart from Eddie, but the distance was getting too much, with everyone also getting piles of homework, going to high school *sucked* and drained even the Losers who were still going to the same school of time for each other, and they went to the same school.

Eddie raises an eyebrow slightly, “What? Just me *Trashmouth*,” He retorts with a slight smirk upon his lips, letting the other know he hasn’t forgotten the other, nor has he forgotten the nickname he and his friends had given him because of the way he ran his mouth. “You going to teach me, or should I file for a new tutor?”

“I’ll teach you,” Richie replies quickly, like if he didn’t - he’d miss something, what he would miss Eddie wouldn’t know and he doesn’t give it anymore thought as he tells Richie what he was struggling with, and Richie starts to help.

After an hour, Eddie’s phone goes off as they’re closing up their books and exchanging about their next meet up. Eddie had to give Richie his number, his mother had made him change it last year. They’re going to meet up at his Tuesday after school because it’s the only day they both could agree on. Eddie waves goodbye to Richie before heading out of the library towards his friend’s *Ford XM Falcom Deluxe Utility*, he jumps in the back in the of the pickup. He remembers the first time his mother ever saw him driving in the back

of the thing, and not *inside* - it nearly gave her a heart attack and ever since then, he has always rode the back whenever he could. One of his friends, Harmony was sitting at the back too and when he hoped in, she held out the cigarette she had in her hand to him.

Richie comes out not too long after Eddie climbs in the pickup, meeting Richie's eyes he puts the thing to his mouth and takes a drag just as the car pulls out onto the road when there was a gap. He waves to Richie as he watches the other get smaller and smaller, handing the smoke back to Harmony. Leaning his head back, he blows out the smoke he had just taken into his lungs. Into his *perfectly* working lungs.

There was faint music playing from the radio as they drove towards Nyx's place, her parents were out for the week – which meant that was where they would hang out for the week. His new friends mostly were girls, and rumours were quick to fly around that he was either *gay* or a *player* . One of them *was* true. Last year he had heard once that he had slept with all of them, and they ended up all laughing about it over drinks one night. They knew his secret; they keep it for him and that's why he likes them. Even though his mother *hates* them.

His mother really hates Harmony though, and that's why to his mother he is dating Harmony. Harmony is a girl his age, seventeen, with blonde curly hair and a few tattoo's already. Her father was in jail for killing someone, and her mother was barely home. She was just shorter then him and she was happy to pretend to date in front of his mother.

Then there was Seph , who was driving, her black hair flying in the wind, she was the one who did the tattoo's onHarmony , having some of her own, she was a year older than the rest of them – but in their same grade because she failed one too many tests. His mother hates her because she knows that Seph was the reason Eddie has his lip pierced. That night he came home after he got it, it was *priceless* to see her reaction. He had countered that he has to keep it, because if he takes it out – he'll get an infection.

Nyx was one his mother could stand slightly; she was more polite compared to that of Harmony or Seph . Nyx helped him with his

sense of style, so now he no longer dresses as if his mother picked out his clothes. To his mother, she was the lesser of the three evils. He has other friends, but not really, maybe just people he knows – these ones though, they're his friends. They're his new set of *Losers*, they love and accept him for who he is and that is all he can ask for. She was also the shortest of the four, her brunette hair almost always in a big braid.

Arriving at Nyx's house, they all got out as Nyx opened up the door to the two-story house that had a nice garden out front as well. There were always at least two plants within each room at any given time, Nyx and her mother loved to garden and plant flowers, it was their bonding activity. The living room was the biggest room, with a big TV and three couches (a four seater that was black with a golden trimming , and two flower printed three seaters). Harmony had called for a pizza, and Eddie was raiding the fridge for drinks as Seph and Nyx picked out a few things to watch.

When the pizza arrived, Harmony grabbed it before sitting down next to Eddie, placing the pizza on the coffee table that sat in the middle of the living room. There was a shitty movie playing, it was one of Nyx's step father's and they were barely paying attention to it, instead talking about the party that was happening tomorrow night.

"I invited Travis and Lou," Harmony spoke as she stuffed her slice into her mouth, not bothering to finish chewing to start talking again, "They're coming, think they're bring some friends too. Seph , didn't you say your half-brother was coming?" Seph nodded her head, and Harmony continued, "Eddie, why don't you invite that tutor of yours, and see if he's got friends."

"Sure," Eddie says with a shrug of his shoulder's, taking a sip of his drink before moving so he was laying his feet across Harmony's lap, his pizza slice sitting on a plate on his lap now as he took out his phone. "If he comes and brings his friends, I'll introduce you, he was one of my old friends before I meet you guys."

"Awesome! We get to meet the *Losers Gang* ," Nyx spoke with a smile upon her lips, she was writing down things for a to do list that they'll sort out in the morning.

Eddie gets out his phone, finding Richie's number and texts the other

8:58pm to TRASHMOUTH: *hey, want to go to a party?*

9:01pm from TRASHMOUTH: *what party?*

9:04pm to TRASHMOUTH: *one my friennds are thriwwing .*

9:04pm to TRASHMOUTH: *you stil friends with he others? bill, bev ,
ben, stan and mike? cos brig them too*

9:10pm from TRASHMOUTH: *do you want me to teach you english
too?*

9:12pm to TRASHMOUTH: *fcku trashmoth*

9:12pm to TRASHMOUTH: *are yu coming or what?*

9:15pm from TRASHMOUTH: *sure eds , we all miss you*

Eddie was smiling as he told them that his old friends would be coming, the movie was long forgotten in favour for planning out the party. They were only inviting twenty or so people, but are expecting fifty. Some coming just for the *party* , others because they've been dragged along by friends but they didn't mind. They knew how to plan a party, after nearly having a huge failure on their hands almost a year and half ago, they now knew what to expect when hosting that weekend's party.

The girls ask him to debrief them on his old friends again, and he ends up telling them stories of his time before he moved schools and out of reach of his old friends. Part of him thinks that this is the chance, the *chance* to mend that bridge to fix the gap that was made by distance. That part hopes that it can because he does truly miss Richie, Bill, Stan and Mike, and Beverly and Ben. It's also been so long since he's seen them, spoken to them and he knows he's changed since then.

It was nice outside, not too warm and not too cold as he stood there watching as the rest of his class ran around the track. His mother had given the school a notice about how he wasn't allowed to participate in anything too taxing on his lungs. He hated it because he wanted to be

out there, running with them because he knows he can run. He did it many times with his friends when they would play, his asthma wouldn't act up. There was only one other person in his gym class who wasn't running, but that's because she claimed that her period was here and the teacher, who was an old greying guy didn't want to hear more about it and just let her sit out of it.

"Hey kid," She says as she takes a seat next to him, flashing him a smile, "Why aren't you out there?"

"Mother says I can't," He replies, and it must show that he wants too despite what his mother says because she tilts her head, her blond curls falling slightly over her face, her face scrunching up in confusion but also understanding.

"Mother's suck, mine does. Hate her, just do it, run ... I won't tell," Her words spoken with a twist on her lips that say, 'this will be our secret'. "Go get your grade. You're going to fail gym if your mother has a note for everything. Tell the teacher you'll do it to your best ability or some bullshit."

"What about you? Why aren't you out there doing it to your best ability?" He questions, raising an eyebrow slightly.

She lets out a small laugh, "Touche kid, I just don't want to do it, simple. Old men are easy to gross out and I told him I'd bleed everywhere if I even so much as jogged. God, his face was priceless," She laughs again as she thought back to ten minutes ago when everyone but him were stretching and she wasn't even dressed in her gym gear. "Next class, promise me you'll run and I'll run beside you. I hate running, but I'll do it if you do."

She is holding out her hand, waiting for him to shake it and he does. It was a challenge; one he feels like he can take on and win.

After school he should have walked himself home, but he didn't; instead he walked himself out to the track field where he dropped his bag on the ground. His hoodie laying on top of his bag, no one was in the track area this afternoon which was great. No teachers to hassle him about the warning's his mother gave the school. He shakes the thought of his mother out of his head before he stretches for a good few moments, eyes watching as other students walk by going home, or to where ever they wanted.

Then, he is off, sprinting around the track – each time, pushing himself faster and faster until his legs were sore and he was thirsty.

He stops at his bag, trying to fish out his drink bottle but failing to find it. “Fuck!” He exclaims, he’ll grab a bottle from the store on his way home. He fishes out his phone before slinging his bag over his shoulder, not surprised to see his mother had called and texted him multiple times. But he also saw texts asking where he was from his friends. “Shit!” He forgot he had plans to meet with the Losers after school. It’s been a month since his transfer and a week since he moved homes. He never thought it would be hard, that he’d forget about plans he made with them. Maybe he was just determined to run, he forgot about his friends while trying to prove something to himself (to his mother).

Guilt was starting claw at him, telling him that this was the end. His breathing was starting to labour and he was searching through his bag, looking for his inhaler. He was frantic in the way he was looking for it, that he hadn’t noticed a group coming up to him until he felt a pair of hands on his cheeks.

“Look at me kid, look at me,” A voice spoke, causing his eyes to snap up to see the girl from his gym class standing in front of him. “We’re going to sit down okay, my friends, they’re going to help.”

Not sensing any harm was going to come to him, he gave a small nod of his head and let himself be lowered to the ground. Out of the corner of his eyes, he can see two other girls who took a seat on either side of him. They weren’t too close, giving him space.

“Wonderful, good job kid, now I want you to breathe,” She says, her hands moving from his face as she moves her hands up and then down. “Follow this, breathe in as much as you can,” raising her hands, “and out,” lowering her hands down again. “Follow my hand movements, okay kid.”

Slowly, he finds his breathing restoring from its rapid pace, his heart stopping its quick beating and lowering to its normal pace. She smiles at him and stops her movements. One of her friends holds out a drink bottle to him, and he downs it. His mind forgetting about all the germs that would come off from sharing a bottle. They don’t say anything for a while, letting him just collect himself and drink out of the bottle. “Thank

you. I couldn't find my inhaler."

"It's alright, but are you alright kid?" The blonde questions, "You looked so panicked, we came running to help."

"Thought you hated running," Eddie is quick to say, and the group let's out a small laugh.

"I do, but when it comes to helping someone – I won't hesitate, but can you answer my question?"

He tells them about his friends, and how this whole new school and new home have put a strain on meeting with them, how he hates it. How he feels like a shit friend for forgetting about it, but they tell him it's okay, that he can't be perfect or remember everything. They introduce themselves, and that was the start of the friendship. Months later, he fully gets his head around the truth about his medication, that it's fake, that they're just placebo's. His mother hates his new friends just as much as his old ones, especially when he won't come home at night.

Richie hasn't moved which made giving Seph the directions to his place easy on him. His car was currently being worked on by Seph's brother, as well as Eddie himself. A project for himself and a way to learn more about cars and how they work. He gets out of the car, going up to the door and knocking on the door.

Maggie opened up the door, and he watched as a smile broke out on her face, "Eddie! I haven't seen you in a long time. Richie will be home in a few minutes, you can go up to his room."

"Thank you, Mrs Tozier," Eddie replies, walking into the house and going up to Richie's room.

Walking in, there wasn't much difference from when they use to hang out. A few new posters hung on the walls, he drops his bag on the poorly made bed and walks around the room. Smiling a little at the photo board that sat on the desk covered in comic books. He remembers a lot of those times, he spots a few of him. Also pinned to the board was a little rainbow heart pin, it made him wonder a little but he pushes the thought aside when he looks over the ones that are from when he was no longer hanging out with them. His smile turned

a little sad at that. There wasn't much new, and it still screamed *Richie* to him. He liked that.

A few moment later, Richie walks into the room, throwing his bag onto the bed. Eddie watches, and he can't help but notice that Richie's shirt said, *Sounds Gay, I'm In* . Grabbing out his books, Eddie takes a seat on the bed, "So what are we learning today?"

"Depends, what are you struggling with Eds ," Richie replies, taking his own books out and giving a light smile.

"It's not Eds ! You know it," Eddie says with a huff and pulls out his work that he had gotten in the last two days. His teacher started teaching something new the other week, and he was struggling with it. More than he usually was, and his teacher offered up this programme, so he signed himself up. "We're still on the same stuff as last time. I just can't wrap my head around it all."

Richie nods his head, moving to sit next to Eddie and for the next thirty minutes, Richie was doing his best to explain how to work through the equations. They break when Richie's mother came into the room with a few snacks and drinks before continuing on. It was getting late, so Mrs Tozier offered for Eddie to stay over, because she missed him too. That had made Eddie smile as he watched her leave the room as he promised to let his mother know.

Now it was late at night, they were sitting on Richie's window ledge as the cold night breeze blew by the open window that carried the smoke out into the air. They have talked about the other Losers, Eddie asking questions about what they've gotten up too, talked about small non trivial things, like what music they like and any new favourite tv shows.

With the smoke in his hand, Eddie brought it up to his lips before he took a long drag of the thing before removing it. Letting the smoke fall out of his mouth in the corners. "I want to ask," Eddie says as he holds the thing out for Richie to take, when Richie does, Eddie uses hand to gesture towards the shirt.

Eddie had watched throughout dinner, how Richie's parents didn't say anything on the comment. Went had just commented on seeing

Eddie again, and *kids* and piercings, but nothing about the shirt. Just the usual Tozier banter with Maggie trying to calm her boys. It made him think of how he'd never be able to *wear* anything remotely like that around his own house. His mother would kill him, he is sure of it. Or maybe, she'd send him to conversion camp. He knows just how *far* he can truly go with pushing her buttons that won't put his life in danger.

Richie raises an eyebrow as he waits for Eddie to ask the question, bringing the cigarette to his lips, "What Eds?"

Eddie let's out a huff and gives a glare that says, *It's not Eds* before starting, "You *wore that* so openly, no questions or... or..." A frustrated grunt left his lips as he was trying to search for the words, he was trying to say. He holds his hand out asking for the cigarette, and takes it when Richie hands it to him. Taking another long drag in, the irony of how long ago he thought these would flare up his asthma is not lost on him. Especially in how he uses it when he can to relieve himself of the same familiar feeling the asthma attacks brought him. He blows out again, taking in another drag before handing it back to Richie.

The smoke flowing past his lips as he stands up to sit down on Richie's bed, his head in his hands. "Fuck!" He feels tears starting to form and he digs the heels of his hands into his eyes. "Fuck. I'm sorry Rich."

It's quiet for a moment, but he could hear faint movements of Richie getting his feet to the floor, of the window shutting and feet across the floor. The bed dipped and he felt an arm wrap around his shoulder, pulling him closer. "Hey, what's wrong? It may have been a *long time* but I will listen."

"I *can't* Richie. My mother, she... I know how she feels... she made it clear. Years ago," A cold laugh left him, he remembers how she had listed the reasons of why she wanted him to stop being friends with the Losers, *specifically* Richie. He was a *dirty boy* and he was making him sick. She would tell him that Richie was sick boy who would pass on his sickness to Eddie if he stayed friends any longer with any of them. How she noticed how close they were, she said she could see him getting *sick*. He wasn't getting sick, and Richie wasn't

sick . He would often ask Richie if he was sick, and Richie would say he wasn't - and Eddie believed his friends wouldn't lie to him.

It wasn't until he met his new set of friends and he started talking about how his mother would talk about them, and then there was *him* coming to terms with the fact that he liked guys that he realised she had meant *gay* . That she thought, and while she was *correct* , Richie was gay. When he first dared ask why his mother thought being gay was a *sickness* , he was met with an onslaught of rude words and many long-winded stories that made him scared. He had even saw pamphlets for a conversion therapy place.

Impulse took over him, and he moved to pull Richie into a kiss. He doesn't know what he expected when it happened, but Richie pushing him away wasn't one of them – at least, *not* in this way. “*Sorry* ,” Eddie mumbles making the space between him and Richie bigger. “I'm sorry, I shouldn't have done that.”

“Yeah, don't you have a girlfriend? So, yeah you shouldn't have,” Richie says, there was a light fluster to the way he spoke.

Eddie looks at Richie, the grace of a smug smile lightly forming on his lips as he looks at the other, “You looked me *up* . That is the only fucking way you would know that! I never mentioned that to you today, or at our first study meet. Nor, did you show up to the party. Is that what you did? You google me and my friends instead?”

“What? No! What are you talking about Eddie,” Richie says, but the blush on his cheeks was saying another story. “It wasn't just me; it was all of us... okay if you must know. Bill was sick, we didn't want to leave him out – so we didn't go.”

Eddie laughs as he imagines them all crammed around in Bill's room around Bill's laptop, all with their phones out all trying to find him, and then by extension his friends. Them just acting like those stereotypical teenage girls in those ‘teen movies’. “Wait... you all could have gotten sick!”

This time it was Richie's turn to laugh a little, “Still the same old Eds I know, still concerned about health and stuff. It's not like we were making out or anything. Germs couldn't spread that much could

they?"

Eddie grabs a pillow and hits Richie with it, "You don't have to *make out* to get germs or sickness. Oh my *god* and I just kissed you. Oh god, what if I get sick! Richie!"

"I'm *fine* Eds , really, I gave it to Bill," Richie replies with a shrug, only earning Eddie to hit him again.

"You fuckface ! How *long ago!*"

" Two weeks ago , *calm down* , a little cold won't hurt anybody," Richie lays down on his bed, and Eddie follows suit, they turn to look at each other. Richie's glasses looking a little skewed on his face as he laid down.

"For the record, Harmony is *not* my girlfriend. Most of those post are just to piss off my mother," Eddie says with a smile upon his lips. He reaches over to push some of Richie's hair that fell on his face out of it.

"Good, because I heard what she did to Greta, I mean... you were still at Derry High back then. Do you know the true story, because I'm sure Greta's wasn't correct," Richie tells him with a light laugh to his tone, "I wouldn't have wanted her after me."

"I kissed you, she'd *beat my ass* , not yours," Eddie laughs, putting his hands under his cheek as he looks at Richie. "She's not my type, though, she has the *trash* mouth that is kinda like my type. Out of my other friends, my mother hates her the most."

"So you're faking dating her? Why even pretend, what's the deal?"

"My mother is homophobic as *fuck*, if you remember."

"I do, but what do-"

"For a straight A student-"

"I've got a few B's"

"Shut it dickward , for a straight A student you aren't getting what

I'm saying."

"It's because you're *not* saying it," It goes quiet between them, and then something clicks into Richie's head. Eddie can see it, "You've never said it."

He shakes his head, "No, but... Harms, Seph and Nyx, they know. It's why our friendship has never budged when stupid rumours about me sleeping with them all never affect us. It *can't* be true, we just laugh." It was true, he hasn't been able to say he was gay. He knows he is, knows it's true but – he can't bring those words to form out in the open. "I just... I know I am, I just... it's like... my mother's voice in my head at times. I can't just... bring myself to say it. Not yet, I will."

"At your own pace Eds ," Richie says and Eddie moves himself so he was curled in on Richie's chest. Tears started to fall down his cheeks and onto Richie's shirt.

Richie's mother came in to make sure they were going to sleep soon, because they have school the next day. Richie told her they'll be going to sleep soon so it's alright, and she said a goodnight before going to bed herself. Richie only excuses himself to grab them some pyjamas to wear, they change and just go back to the same position. Richie never once mentioning the crying and Eddie was thankful it, he felt Richie's fingers run through his hair that ended up putting him to sleep.

In the morning, they get ready for school and Eddie borrows some of Richie's clothes which were a little big on him, but Eddie didn't mind. He promised to return them at their next study session. They had a quick breakfast that Maggie had prepared before Eddie climbed into the back of Seph's ute , and offered Richie a ride to school.

"She was being a complete bitch, I'll tell you," Harmony spoke as they sat in her backyard, her feet resting on top of Seph's lap as the blonde took a drag of her smoke before handing it off to Seph , "I'll tell you the story. You went to school with the bitch, I'm sure you heard the story wrong. Like she was some innocent lamb bullshit."

"Yeah, she claimed you hit her because you were jealous or something. Me

and my friends, tried to avoid her when possible,” Eddie spoke with a small shrug, only handling the cigarette to pass it to Nyx. It’s been a few months since he started hanging out with these girls and they’re wonderful. They, much like the Losers, don’t make fun of him or participate in the names thrown his way. And they accept him for his faults.

“Okay, so like... I went to the pharmacy to pick up my mother’s medication. Don’t ask. She was talking about how she had the best day, not even bothering to serve me. How she’d thrown trash onto some girl, again. Calling this girl some names with her friend on the phone, slagging her off. I was starting to boil with rage, she was doing this shit at what? Thirteen years old? Bitch, anyway, she also started bragging about this boy from her school and how he’d broken his arm and shit. Whatever, she said it was blank and made a stupid comment about his medication being bullshit like she had done him some huge favour before signing his cast. So, okay maybe she wasn’t that bad I thought for like zero point one second, because then the bitch said she wrote **LOSER** on the cast. And let me tell you, I saw red! My fist went straight into her nose. It made her look at me.

“Like, this bitch had the audacity to talk shit about these people. She doesn’t know why no one had signed his cast. I should have stopped at one punch, but she called me a slut, so I punched her again – that is when her father came out, threw the prescription at me and banned me and my mother from the place. Mother grounded me for a month, I told her why, it went down to two weeks. My mother lives for revenge,” The cigarette had gotten back to Harmony now.

“That is nothing like what we heard at school, uh...” Eddie’s rubbing his arm, the one Henry had broken years ago, where the cast had sat unsigned until Greta did that. His memories of that day, coming to his mind. Beverly had gone home early that day because she had to clean herself up from the rubbish Greta had piled on her – she wasn’t quick enough that time around. He had to get a new inhaler; his one was running low. How she had told him his medication was a placebo, that it was bullshit. He didn’t fully understand what she meant by it, and honestly, he still doesn’t. “What is a gazebo?”

“That,” Nyx spoke pointing towards a little Greek inspired gazebo, Eddie’s face contoured a little in confusion.

His new friends, watched as he tried to search for the correct word because it was clear that was not what he meant. Pulling out his inhaler he puts it in the middle of their makeshift circle. "Bullshit, that is what Greta said, they're..."

"Placebos? You mean placebos?" Harmony asks, and Eddie gives a nod of his head because yes, that was the word. "It's a weird word, don't worry your pretty head about it. Bullshit. Eddie, are you saying your medication is a placebo? Because that means they aren't real. It's fake, sugar pills or just flavoured water," She says indicating to the inhaler in the middle of them.

"Not real? But, mother says I have to have them. I'm sick," Eddie replies, his hand going to his bag, pulling out all the pill bottles that had his name on them. For everything, plus a few average pain killers. "Fake?"

"Sadly, if anyone is to know if they're fake, it's be Greta," Seph says, a slight sad smile on her face at the thought of having to say that. "If she helps her dad at the place, she'd have to know – so she wouldn't give you real ones."

"Here, let me have a look," Nyx holds out her hand, and he places them into her hand. She turns them in her hand, opening them up and pouring them all out into the small ashtray. "Bullshit. Though these, keep these." She hands him back the Adderall bottle, the only one she hadn't tipped out.

"Wait! You're the kid!" Harmony exclaims, eyes opening wide before she gets up and moves to hug Eddie, holding in a tight embrace. The cigarette that she had been holding had died out and fallen to the ground. "I told them I'd hug the kid with the cast if I meet him. If I find out who the girl is, I'll do it too." She plants a kiss on his cheek, and he can smell the smoke from her as she moves so she is just sitting next to him.

A few hours later, all of them were inside and sitting on Harmony's big king-sized bed. Seph was talking about her brother and his boyfriend, and Eddie was quiet as she talked. It had been something that has been gnawing at him for a while. For much longer than he can remember, it's been eating at him. It still is. They're a few drinks in, and he's a bit tipsy when he asks her about her brother. About how he knew, how he told her. She told him what she could and he gave a small nod of his head.

Harmony lights up a cigarette, taking a drag before passing it to Nyx, who passed on taking a drag. It came to Eddie next, and he brought it to his lips – thinking like he was using his inhaler, he just didn't need to trigger it. It was rough, the feeling as he took the smoke into his lungs. It was a foreign thing in his body, but he held it in for as long as he could before blowing it out like he's seen Richie and Bev do, like Harmony and Seph do.

It was four in the morning a month later, none of them going to sleep – just passing the cigarette around, talking and drinking. His phone had gone off multiple times, it was his mother but he ignored it like he's learnt to do now. She would demand to know where he was, for him to come home and he didn't want to go home. It was his turn and he'd taken a drag, the thing sitting between his fingers as he blows out the smoke, "Guys I... I think I..." It's late and maybe that's why he's doing this, maybe it's the alcohol in his system, maybe it's the fact that he believes they won't hate him for it. He doesn't believe they won't, he knows they won't hate him for, and he needs someone to know besides himself. "Um... Don't like girls. Like... kissing them, or that stuff. I want to do that with boys."

"Yeah?" Seph muses, and he gives a nod of his head as he held the cigarette out towards her, "Cool. Just guys?"

Eddie nods his head again as Seph takes the thing, bringing it to her lips, "Yes. I just... you can't tell my mother, she'd... kill me. That's the one thing I can't..." Can't stand up to her about, the one thing he feels like he can't use to piss her off because that is the one thing he fears that if he did, his life would truly be in danger. "I can't let her know."

"It's okay, we understand. If you ever need to fake date anyone to get your mum off your back – use any of us. Just let us know," Nyx spoke as she laid herself down, clearly wanting to go to sleep. It was a sign for them all to turn in, so Seph put out the smoke before lying next to Nyx.

It's now nearly the end of the school year, and his in that time his old friends have merged with his new ones. He had a good laugh as he watched as Beverly was suddenly embraced in a hug by Harmony after he whispered in her ear that Beverly was the girl Greta had been talking about. Harmony didn't forget what she said she would do.

The Losers were told about the *fake* relationship between Harmony and Eddie, were made aware of Eddie's sexuality and he couldn't be more thankful for how they accepted him. Not that he thought they wouldn't, but seeing and being around the support – seeing his support system grow and *know* it was there was great for him. It made him feel good about himself and his sexuality. Though, he was still scared of his mother finding out.

It was fun, falling back into old patterns with the Losers and them having his back, and him theirs. He likes how his two different friend groups collided well. It was getting late one night while he was at a party thrown by one of his track team mates.

He had made the track team that year, and his mother, went *ape shit* about it – clamming his lungs were too delicate for it, but Eddie stood up to her, told him he was *going to run*, whether she liked it or not. She fussed, and cursed the gym teacher out and he fired back that he wanted to run.

The party was loud, and he was drunk. All his friends had scattered around, he saw Stan in a corner talking with a few people as he walked past him to get to the kitchen. In there, he saw Seph, Nyx and Bev talking away with Ben and Mike. When he spotted Bill, he asked where Richie was, Bill pointed to outside and Eddie thanked him before going out.

Walking outside, he could feel the nice chill of the wind. It wasn't too warm, nor too cold. It was just *right* for him to enjoy it. Looking around, he found Richie sitting on the porch swing, a cup in his hand and a lit cigarette in the other. Eddie sat next to him, taking the cigarette when Richi held it out, he took a drag before exhaling, "Hey, wanna know a secret?"

Richie looked at Eddie, raising an eyebrow slightly, but nodded his head and Eddie wonders what that *sparkle* was in Richie's eye when he said those words. They had not talked about that *kiss*, Eddie had planted on him – and Eddie didn't want to bring it up, and he wonders if that is what was playing on Richie's mind right now.

"Looking *way* back on it, I think I always knew I was..." Eddie makes a gesture with his hand, Richie gives a light, understanding

nod. "Thinking back... I think I once had a crush on Bill, like... when we were young. Before I meet you and Stan, but... didn't you know, *know*. Thought that was normal shit you thought about a friend. One who never mocked or called you names. Probably could have fallen for him."

"Did you?" Richie questions, his eyes looking into his cup now instead of at Eddie.

That causes Eddie to laugh a little, "No. Because this *little* asshole came in. Fucking love him though, hell... he was the first guy I ever kissed."

"Oh..." Eddie can hear the sadness that fills Richie's voice with that *one* word, and Eddie's heart drops to the ground because he may be drunk – but was he not being clear enough. "Is he here?" Or maybe Richie's brain is fogged with the alcohol he's consumed.

"Yes asshole, want a mirror to see him?"

"Huh?"

"Richie... the *asshole* is you. I fucking l-," He doesn't get to finish the sentence as he throws up on the porch, groaning and throwing his head back a little. "Shouldn't have had that sixth cup." He mumbles as he watches as Richie goes back inside. He had thought that feeling in his stomach had just been his *nerves* because he had planned on doing this in a spur of the moment – guess he was wrong. Though, it could have been both of those things.

A few minutes later, Richie comes out with a cup and hands it to Eddie telling him to drink it and soon Harmony and Mike are out too. Harmony instructs Mike to take Eddie up to a room upstairs, while she and Richie will clean up the mess Eddie made.

Mike was strong, and easily picked Eddie up before taking Eddie inside and following Harmony's instructions on where the room was. Eddie felt the bed, nice and soft as he was put down on it, and he felt tired the longer he laid there. Mike said something but Eddie was already starting to fall sleep and the words and music outside were dulling away.

He wakes up a few hours later, the need to pee and the want to brush his teeth. There was an arm around him, but he didn't think much about it – often he would fall asleep next to Harmony, Nyx or Seph . So he gets out of bed without looking and he does his business and was in the middle of brushing his teeth when the door opened, relaxing when he saw that it was Harmony. He spits into the sink, not saying anything as puts the brush back into his mouth.

“Such a classy move kid, tell the guy you're like totally in love with you're in love with him *then* puking in the middle of said confession, grade a,” Harmony teases, and he flips her off, “What? I could never pull that kind of shit.”

“Yeah, cos you can handle a bottle of vodka all by yourself without getting that drunk,” Eddie retorts back after spitting, and rinsing the toothbrush before putting it back.

“Hey kid, did you *even* look at who was in the bed with you? Cos it ain't me, or the other girls?” Harmony muses, with a grin upon her lips. She moves to go press a kiss to his cheek, “You have a place here, Eddie. Know that, if your mother ever... you can come right here. Remember that, okay. Now... that was too serious for me, go find your loverboy kid!”

They share a laugh before she leaves, and he follows. He watches as she goes into her mother's room, and he walks back into Harmony's room, where he saw a sleeping figure on the bed. In the dark, he could see shadow of a pair of glasses and his heart picks up in pace. Smiling to himself, Eddie walks back over to the bed and climbs in.

Almost instantly, Richie was moving closer to him, wrapping him up in his arms again. “Warm, don't leave again Eds ,” Richie's voice clearly full of sleep, it muffles a little as he buries his head into Eddie's chest.

“I won't,” Eddie replies, pressing a soft kiss to the top of Richie's head, and they fell asleep together.

Author's Note:

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